TOWN & COUNTRY CHURCH

HOLBROOK LIBRARY PACIFIC SCHOOL OF RELIGION

# Witness of the Rural Church

THOMAS ALFRED TRIPP

• These tremendous times offer an occasion for examining the witness and motives of the church in town and country. Can the rural church give a clear account of its own mission? The answer to this question must be concerned not so much with the mechanics of particular parishes and projects as with basic purposes. It is a question of what is required if the rural church is to be *the Church.*

### *Deepest Concern*

First, we must think of preaching in the rural church. Theological preaching is Christian preaching. The reference is to the basic religious meanings, not theological controversy. Theological preaching means consideration of the deepest concern of man's travail in life and death. Sermons which merely present good ideas and helpful suggestions for private and social conduct are not necessarily Christian. They may be good counsel without tapping the resources of the Christian tradition and the dynamics of salvation.

In general, rural churches are composed largely of self-satisfied, middle class, land-owning farmers and village business people. Preaching to a class which feels its own self-righteousness and self-sufficiency requires a Gospel with a cutting edge. Middle class people say "Amen" to a sermon which advises them to be good, friendly and upright but they go out of church unchanged. They go on behaving on farm and in business as the same competitive selves they were before. The middle class needs preaching which analyzes it to itself and holds this analysis up to the light of the Gospel. In seeing themselves as they are, as sinful persons, there is hope that members of a complacent group may have a sense of contrition and from contrition may come repentance and salvation.

Inadequate preaching from a theological point of view is not limited to the rural pulpit alone. It is evident in the cities as well. A recent casual "sermon-tasting" survey in seven reputedly "outstanding preacher" churches in New York City revealed that the many sermons heard by this writer in rural pulpits during the past fifteen years compare favorably with those of the city. But this fact is no comfort to the rural church.

### *How Improve Preaching?*

What is wrong with rural preaching? Is it a mood of the times to preach palliatives? Is it a neglect of the Bible as a resource? Is it a lack of acquaintance with theology? It is probably all three and perhaps there are other causes such as inadequacies within the church and in the concept of the ministry. This is not to say all preaching is poor; rather that more of it should be better. All of it should be Christian.

No agency except the rural ministry, itself, has the power or wisdom necessary to reform rural preaching. Fortunately, some rural pastors are working at improvement in the situation. In hundreds of seminars and in-service training processes every year the message of the rural ministry is a regular issue for consideration. More and more this concern should be on the agenda for discussion among rural church groups. Books by social-minded theologians who are writing on the current religious scene have promise for founding preaching on Christian tradition.

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### *In This Issue*

What should be the witness of the rural urch in these times? Thomas Alfred ipp, see Board of Editors, conducts a ief but searching inquiry, beginning on ge 1. He considers that preaching is as od in the country as in the city, but he o has other observations.

James M. Carr, Presbyterian Church in e U.S., now vice-chairman of the Depart-ent of the Town and Country Church, scribes the many contributions that untry churches make to the church at rge—Page 3. The title is "Who's Sub-lizing Who?"

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*Spiritual Fellowship*

A second emphasis in rural work pertains to the development of a church which is a spiritual fellowship in which the layman is given his full significance. Too many churches are "run" by ministerial dictation, apparently from the clergy's lack of good leadership technique for enlisting the efforts of laymen through group work processes. Lacking active participation, laymen do not have a strong sense of responsibility for the church. The consequence is a church weak in fellowship and spiritual insight.

The concept of "let the church be the Church" is having an influence upon religious thinking at this time. The question arises whether the spirit of the true Church can be recovered unless laymen have a sense of responsibility and an opportunity to be the Church through a democratically operated fellowship. Daniel T. Jenkins, in *The Church Meeting and Democracy* (Independent Press, London), rightly says that an inner-group fellowship can be recovered only if faith is renewed.

*The Laity*

But faith can be renewed only by having a responsible, working church. No amount of personal prayer and introspection by irresponsible churchmen will bring the desired result. Let the laymen take charge of the church, take responsibility for it and suffer for its welfare. Then, and then only, will prayer, faith, fellowship and introspection in the inner fellowship of the Church count for something. Works will not bring salvation but faith and fellowship without Christian responsibility are impotent. The rural church needs a ministry which leads its membership in service for their own religious welfare.

Again, outsiders can do little toward the solution of so fundamental a problem but it should be the firm policy of rural pastors to attain true leadership qualities; that is, to lead but not to take responsibilities belonging to the laity of the church. It is important for rural ministers to understand the true nature of leadership of laymen as preferable to dictation, to master the processes of group work with laymen and to use lay responsibility as a means to spiritual growth and Christian fellowship. (*Leadership for Rural Life* by Dwight W. Sanderson, Association Press, is a good book for pastors.)

*Action*

A third emphasis is the place of the church in the community and its responsibility for Christian action in society. Man lives in the community and in the larger society. The church, as organized in history, is similarly involved in a sociological setting. Injustice, maladjustment and inequalities accrue from human relationships in community and the larger social scene. The farmer's products, even in their raw forms, are subject to manipulation, speculation and greedy treatment through such agencies as the grain future's market. Commerce and processing taint our food with the sin of man's inhumanity to man.

*Church Responsibility*

The evangelization of man and the creation of a true social fellowship depends, not upon the development of a perfect secular order but upon a church which takes responsibility for improving the sociological community and world in which it finds itself. Recovery of the ideal of the truly spiritual church within may depend upon man's first being Christian in the society without.

Much time and effort is spent in the rural church movement to create a sound social conscience. Some may feel that too much emphasis is placed upon teachings about rural problems. However, faith and fellowship in the church must be accompanied by Christian concern for human relationships in the rural community and society.

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## Young Leaves

The warm green of young leaves,
How it spreads out and cleaves
Until it becomes part
Of my own bleeding heart.

—*Rusticus*

## Rural Life Sunday, 1951

• Rural Life Sunday will be observed in 1951 on the fifth Sunday after Easter, Rogation Sunday, April 29th.

The Department of the Town and Country Church again has available an order of service suitable for use by a congregation. The order of service for 1951 was prepared by Dr. Wesley A. Hotchkiss, Associate Director, Town and Country Department, Congregational Christian Churches.

In addition to the order of service containing responsive readings and suggested hymns, there is a bibliography and data on the origin of Rural Life Sunday.

Copies in black and white, or with a colored photograph on the cover may be obtained from your cooperating home mission board. If copies are not available through your home mission board, the Department of the Town and Country Church is prepared to fill orders. The rates at which these may be procured are as follows:

*In Black and White:* Single copies, 5 cents each; 100 copies, $1.00; 250 copies, $2.05; 500 copies, $3.30; 1,000 copies, $6.25; carriage extra on quantity orders.

*With Colored Photograph on Page 1:* Single copies, 10 cents each; 100 copies, $2.25; 250 copies, $4.50; 500 copies, $8.00; 1,000 copies, $14.00; carriage extra on quantity orders.

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## Anniversary Celebration

• Zion (Stone Valley) Lutheran and Reformed Church, Hickory Corners, Pa., celebrated its 185th anniversary late in 1950, when ground was broken for a $15,000 addition, "to be used primarily for Sunday school purposes."

Zion has "mothered" three other rural churches although its own members number only about 200. The history of this church is told by its present pastor, the Rev. Richard T. Schellhase, in a recent issue of *The Messenger*, St. Louis, Mo.

# Who's Subsidizing Who?

JAMES M. CARR

Subsidy! Sustentation! Benevo-nces! Home Mission Help! These e familiar terms in the thinking church extension committees and ome mission churches. A very large umber of churches throughout the eneral Assembly are called home ission churches. In the thinking members of church extension ommittees, these ordinarily are urches which require financial as-stance to support a pastor. Unless nancial help is available from some utside source, many of these urches would be without the serv-es of an ordained minister. The hurch as a whole, through its As-mbly, Synod, and Presbytery urch extension boards and com-unities has a good financial policy administering benevolent funds.

### wo-Way Process

On the other hand, because there that continuous channelling of nds from stronger to weaker urches, some are inclined to feel at this channelling is only a one-ay process. In one Presbytery there e more than fifty churches. All but x of them are within the classifica-on of town and country churches. prominent member of the largest rban church in that Presbytery re-arked recently: "I don't see why e should be called upon to give so uch financial help to the smaller urches. They should do more for emselves."

This urban church member is ght. It is possible to pauperize lit-e churches, and keep them poor. hey should do more for them-lves. But this very attitude gives ise to the question, "Who's sub-dizing who?"

The raising of this question in no nse expresses a lack of appreciation for the subsidy which the weak hurch must have from the strong. Her very life depends upon this transfusion" of funds into her min-stry and program. And in behalf of he many home mission churches throughout the entire Assembly we extend a most grateful "Thank You" to every urban pastor and every urban church member for the continuing financial support which we receive through home mission appropriations.

### *Transfusion*

On the other hand, there is another type of "transfusion" which the urban church must have, else it will not prosper. Consider three ways in which the rural church is subsidizing the urban church. Take the case of the Jones family. Mr. Jones for many years was a successful farmer. He and Mrs. Jones reared six children. These six children were supported by parents whose income was earned on their rural farm. They were educated in their local rural school, supported largely by taxes from rural people. Their Christian training was received in their rural church, supported entirely by income from its rural members without outside financial aid. Two of the daughters and one son completed college. The son went on to graduate school and became a college professor. He is now teaching in an urban college, and is an elder in his urban church. The two college trained daughters

Congregational Church, Weston, Conn.

*Photo by Philip Gendreau, N. Y.*

married and live with their husbands who are in business in the nearby city. They are active in their urban church. The other three children live in the rural community where they were reared. All three are successful, and are active in their childhood home church. Both Mr. and Mrs. Jones have died, and their estate has been divided among their children. Half of this rural estate, inherited by the three children in the city, has become urban wealth.

This story of the Jones family illustrates the three ways in which the rural church is subsidizing the urban church.

*Membership*

Most additions to rural church membership are on profession of faith, and most losses of members are by letter of transfer to churches in urban communities. On the average, about half of rural youth migrate to the cities. If they have been reached by the rural church and their Christian loyalties have been established, they become active members of urban churches. Urban churches could not grow if it were not for the continual "transfusion" of new life from rural communities.

Recently I was visiting the pastor of an urban church in a small Mississippi city. He has been pastor there for thirteen years. There are eight Presbyterian churches in his county, all rural except his one church. On Saturday afternoon we visited the pastor of five of those other seven rural churches in his county. I asked him, "Of all the members you have received by letter during your thirteen years here, how many came from these five churches?" He replied, "Almost all of them."

*Leadership*

These rural trained youth take their places of leadership in urban life. They become leaders in urban institutions. A very large percentage of elders and deacons of urban churches were rural-trained.

In one county in South Carolina there are seven Presbyterian churches, all rural except one. This one church has about six hundred members. It is the only Presbyterian church in its city of thirty-two hundred population. The pastor of one of the rural churches of the county had been invited to speak at a joint meeting of elders and deacons in that urban church. He asked them: "How many of you men, now elders or deacons in this church, grew up as children or youth in this church?" There was one man. He then asked: "How many of you men grew up in one of the other six rural churches in this county?" There were twenty-one men who responded.

*Wealth*

The steady "transfusion" of life from the rural church to the urban church means also a steady transfusion of wealth.

The three Jones children, once rural but now urban, are using their rural training, and their earning capacity produces urban wealth. Also their part of their parents' estate, once rural, has now become urban wealth.

So while we think of subsidizing rural churches, many of which need it to maintain adequate pastoral leadership and a good program, let us not forget that the urban church would grow steadily weaker if it were not for the continual "transfusion" of membership and leadership and wealth from the rural community.

Who's subsidizing who?

—*The Christian Observer*

## "Status of Rural Sociology"

• The Farm Foundation, 600 South Michigan Avenue, Chicago 5, Ill., has recently published a document entitled, *Human Relations in Agriculture and Farm Life*. This is a report of a study which was made by a committee of land grant college personnel on the status of rural sociology in the fifty-one land grant colleges of the United States. The study was sponsored by the Farm Foundation.

The study indicates a shortage of competent personnel in the field of rural sociology and the need for more in-service training in this subject.

## Correspondence

To the Secretary of the
Department of the Town and
Country Church:

The officers, board of directors and members of the National Catholic Rural Life Conference wish to express to you and your associates sincerest sentiments of thanks and appreciation for your greetings as related to us during our 28th annual convention in Belleville, Illinois.

We hope that at all times our cordial relationships will continue. Our Conference offers its assistance toward any work that will seek to accomplish our common aims and purposes. We ask that God bless you and yours.

Very sincerely yours,

—L. G. Ligutti,
*Executive Director*

## A School and Its Land

• The Westtown School (Friends) "has always had an interest in the soil. Its six hundred acres of rich Chester County land have nourished the school for these many years and a large per cent of the students have come from farm communities and later returned to them. Interest in nature study and in scientific training have always been fostered at the school." Lately the students have centered interest on the Brandywine Valley which "offers an amazingly rich opportunity for studying history, agriculture, industry, geology, conservation, and sociology." A recent issue of *The American Friend* tells about field trips by students to the immediate environment of the school.

## The 1951 Convocation

• The 1951 National Convocation on the Church in Town and Country will be held at Portland, Oregon, October 30-November 1. From time to time announcements will be made in this journal concerning the plans and program.

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# Land and Liberty

## A Statement on the Family Farm

CHARLES F. BRANNAN

• Our present agricultural productivity is a great source of national strength. But in my opinion, agriculture's role in the present world struggle goes far beyond the ability to produce in abundance.

Farming as a way of life has embedded democracy's roots firmly in the American soil. Down through our history, agriculture always has made and is still making more than material contributions to our economy and our national strength. Ever since the founding of our Nation, people who owned and tilled their own soil have contributed a strong, stabilizing moral influence upon our national life. Such farmers are still a solid bulwark of democracy—a real safeguard against the inroads of communism in our own land.

Our family farmers particularly represent the traditional, American pattern of farming that is democracy's answer to Soviet collectivism.

If democracy is to be a continuing source of hope to others, democracy must continue to advance in America. And family farming must continue strong here if the principle of family farming is to be the center of hope in the world-wide struggle for the minds of men.

### *Landless People*

In many parts of the world, vast numbers of landless, hungry and despairing peasants are stirring with the inherent desire for self-betterment through social revolt. They are looking for any change that kindles hope. But too often they are grasping in the wrong direction.

Most of such unrest throughout the world today can be traced to insecure and inequitable land tenure. Under such conditions, farm people do not receive an equitable share of what the land produces; they have no stake in the land upon which they toil. Such patterns of land ownership create nothing but hopelessness among peasants who work the soil, and make them an easy prey for communism's glittering false lures.

But family farming and family farm ownership is the historic American pattern—not the Soviet pattern. And it is only in this American pattern that restless peasants of the world can find the ray of hope they seek. Widespread land ownership, security of tenure, and equitable landlord-tenant arrangements are all part of the basic fabric of democracy. By improving the economic opportunities for family farmers and for family farm ownership, we offer our best proof of the right to leadership in behalf of farm people throughout the world—leadership to land and liberty.

### *Family-Farm Concept*

We must fully recognize the fundamental importance of our family farm concept to the preservation of democracy.

Daniel Webster had the foresight 130 years ago to give this warning, and I quote: "The freest government, if it could exist, would not be long acceptable if the tendency of the laws were to create a rapid accumulation of property in few hands, and to render the great mass of the population dependent and penniless."

Webster added: "In the nature of things, those who have not property, and see their neighbors possess much more than they think them to need, cannot be favorable to laws made for the protection of property. When this class becomes numerous, it grows clamorous. It looks on property as its prey and plunder, and is naturally ready, at all times, for violence and revolution."

His words have been borne out by events abroad.

We must make it clear that we have had more than a century of experience in meeting with such problems as are faced by the farm people of Asia, the Near East, Africa,

South America—problems of land tenure and ownership.

Our present family farm system didn't just happen by accident, it has been purposefully created by our Government's land policies—policies motivated in the main by the philosophy of our democracy's founders and early leaders that the freehold principle was essential to a strong democracy.

We were not without powerful forces who felt otherwise, and would have concentrated control of the land in the hands of the privileged few. We are not without them today.

### *Philosophy of Founders*

But the philosophy of such men as Jefferson and Lincoln, Webster and Thomas Hart Benton that we can best strengthen democracy by multiplying freeholders has prevailed. It was early exemplified in our Homestead Act of 1862 which gave family farms freely to those who would farm them. It exists in our laws and our thinking down to the present day.

Operator-ownership of family farms has long been one of the chief goals of agricultural policy in this country. Much of our farm legislation has been enacted toward that objective. But we do not draw a hard line of class distinction in this country between tenant farmers and farm owners. We know opportunity must always be kept open at the bottom of the ladder, and that adequate opportunity must exist to climb that ladder to farm ownership. So we have come to consider our goal in its broader settings of security of tenure, whether the farm is owner or tenant-operated.

If they are going to farm efficiently, conserve the soil, and participate fully in civic, community and public affairs that are a vital part of democracy, farmers must have a reasonable security in their tenure and equitable treatment in tenure relations.

### *Security on the Land*

We have strengthened democracy by encouraging that security on the land.

Our record of family farm ownership, and opportunity for tenants to step up the ladder to farm ownership, is not exceeded and perhaps unequalled anywhere in the world.

It has been upon this family farming concept that the real strength of American agriculture has been built.

We must preserve that pattern, both to strengthen democracy at home, and as an example for the world.

In the world's ideological struggle, our family farm tradition has become an important weapon in the moral arsenal of democracy.

Let's make sure the weapon is adequate.

It's a good time for us to take a soul-searching look at ourselves—to look for all possible improvements in our own situation.

Are we doing all that can be done to increase opportunities for farm ownership, and to preserve the family farm tradition?

### *Preaching and Practicing*

Are we really practicing what we preach?

There are a few disturbing signs on our own horizon. Although on a statistical basis farm ownership has made rapid gains during the last decade, much of the increase can be attributed to establishment of small part-time farms, and even rural residences near our large cities. Recently we have been hearing reports of heavy purchasing of farms by nonfarmers, and of rapid increases in land values. Such developments tend to make it more difficult for young men to get started in farming. The present high investment cost for land, buildings, machinery and livestock tend to limit rather than encourage expansion of the family farming tradition, and shift agriculture further into the realm of big business.

All of our great farm organizations are strongly committed to the family farm principle. Our Government has long recognized that preservation of the family farm concept best serves the Nation's interest.

But it's time to prove still further our right to world leadership in this fundamental field of equitable utilization of the land for human benefit—to exemplify by action our knowledge of the link between land and liberty.

It's time for all of us to be thinking about how we can make further advances toward the goal of family farm ownership, and how we can best preserve the family farm ownership that now exists as a cornerstone of our democracy.

I believe that more can be done, and that more must be done.

It is my sincere hope that the Department of Agriculture may be able to greatly improve its services to family farmers of the United States. I believe that by so doing we can strengthen democracy at home, and by our example contribute greatly to democracy's influence throughout the rest of the world.

### *Intensive Program*

Toward that basic objective, the Department has already taken preliminary steps to embark upon an intensified program during the months ahead to secure still further the family farm's position as a fundamental institution in our democracy.

I believe we should earnestly endeavor: first, to develop and put into operation such changes as are possible under existing legislation in the Department's policies, programs and procedures that would result in

nproving our services to family rms and farm families; and, sec- nd, to develop and have available r the consideration of the Con- ress a comprehensive set of recom- endations for changes in existing gislation that would authorize the epartment of Agriculture to im- rove still further its services to mily farms and farm families. onsideration could also well be ven similar steps that would en- ble the land-grant colleges to ex- and their contributions in this eld.

It is an undertaking in which I ill ask for the cooperation of all e major farm organizations.

It is, in my opinion, an under- aking of such major importance as o call for detailed study not only y appropriate agencies of the U. S. epartment of Agriculture, the vari- us state departments of agriculture, nd the land-grant colleges, and ach of the farm organizations, but lso by state and county USDA ouncils, and by state and county MA and FHA committees in order o develop sound recommendations rystallizing the thinking of Ameri- an agriculture all the way from its rassroots to the top of its organized eadership.

Our end goal is the strengthening f democracy through the most ef- ective service to the family farm.

Rather than starting with precon- eived ideas of the best path to pur- ue, I believe the challenge of find- ng that path must be shared by ag- iculture as a whole if we hope to chieve the unity of effort so neces- ary to reach our goal.

Of course, there's more than mor- l justification to such a campaign or preservation of the family farm attern. There's economic justifica- ion, too.

Once again, agriculture is being ut to the test of meeting the na- ion's expanding needs for produc- ion.

Our abundant production is es- ential to the Nation's preparedness, nd it is essential to help fight the conomic spiral of inflation.

Our hope for expanding produc- ion rests with increasing the effi- iency of all farmers and farming nits, but more particularly among smaller farming units now producing less efficiently than is possible. As we enter a large-scale preparedness program, we must make the best use of all of our resources. And we certainly cannot overlook the potential contributions of additional thousands of small farmers who could greatly increase their output of farm commodities if furnished with the necessary credit, farming and management guidance, and whatever else it may take to bring them fully into the productive pattern of the efficient American family farm.

Let me emphasize that in talking about greater efforts to strengthen the family farm, we are talking about efforts in behalf of the great bulk of all American farmers, not just those in the lowest income brackets.

And let me emphasize, too, that a well-rounded program for the strengthening of the family farms of America must eventually embrace adequate price and income stabilization, conservation of our resources, and improved aid to low-income farmers as well as credit and tenure-relations assistance.

For all of these, the search for improvement must go on. But throughout such a search we can and must keep our sights on the basic concept of preserving and strengthening the traditional American pattern of family farming.

It can be both the starting point and the final goal; the search for ways and means to reach that goal must cover the widest possible range in between.

—From an address by the Secretary of Agriculture, Before the North Dakota Farmers Union

## King Honors Farm Worker

• On the recent honor list of King George III was the name of Mrs. Fanny Horne, Horne Farm, Preston, England. Mrs. Horne is a farm worker, aged 87 years. She received the British Empire Medal because of her efficiency in the care of barley fields.

## "Watchers of the Springs"

• For the past four years the Rural Church Department of the Virginia Council of Churches has conducted an annual Rural Life Sermon Contest for the rural ministers of that state. Among the sermons submitted during this period, the twelve best were chosen to be bound in a volume entitled, *Watchers of the Springs.*

In addition to the twelve prize-winning sermons, *Watchers of the Springs* contains four relevant addresses by Charles J. Galpin, Edward K. Ziegler, C. R. Stevens and T. S. Buie.

This collection of rural life sermons and addresses covers a wide variety of subjects and is replete with valuable suggestions and help for the rural minister everywhere.

*Watchers of the Springs* may be procured from the Virginia Council of Churches, Planters Bank Building, Bridgewater, Va., for 65 cents a single copy; or 50 cents per copy, postpaid, in quantities of ten copies or more.

## Goats and Preachers

• The National Convocation on the Church in Town and Country, held in Columbia, Missouri, brought more than five hundred rural ministers from every corner of America —and from outside, too. Perhaps we have never had such a great influx of visitors to the office of *Dairy Goat Journal.* Rural ministers everywhere are interested in dairy goats as a means of improving the economic and nutritional level of their communities. Many, many of these rural parsons are goatkeepers themselves; some of them well-known to *Dairy Goat Journal* readers as active breeders.

From the deep South to the Pacific and the Atlantic rural programs are casting a searching eye toward the dairy goat as one of the important stones on which they can help build a better life for rural America. It was a revelation to us—right in our own office!

—*The Dairy Goat Journal*

## Negro Minister Serves White Congregation

• The white congregation of the Staffordville (Conn.) Congregational Church recently greeted its new minister, the Rev. Roland T. Heacock, a Negro, and approved his inaugural sermon on "The Vision and the Answer," in which he deplored "racism."

In this sermon Mr. Heacock said: "It is a sad commentary on the state of democracy and Christianity that when an obscure, untalented Negro minister takes over the pastorate of a tiny rural Connecticut church, that it is big news. Why should it be big news?

"Why shouldn't we, human beings, just accept one another regardless of the color of our skin or our eyes, if we are decent and worthy?

"And why, may I ask, is not the Christian religion in the forefront practicing this simple, elemental precept we so loudly proclaim—the work and dignity of human personality?

"The plain truth is, and I take this opportunity of saying so, so that reporters may report it, the plain truth is that the Christian church should hang its head in shame at its snobbery, racism and class consciousness. . . ."

## Lay Preaching Program

• The benefits derived by a small rural church in Arkansas from part-time lay preaching is told by Charles A. Stuck in a recent issue of *The Methodist Layman,* Chicago, Ill. Mr. Stuck is District Lay Leader of the North Arkansas Methodist Conference.

Pleasant Valley Church is unable to pay for a full-time pastor so "services are held once a month by the pastor and once a month by a layman." One of the greatest benefits, says Mr. Stuck, is that "those participating have been closer to God because of the responsibility on their shoulders. It is likely that some of the young people assisting the speaker will feel called to give their lives to full-time Christian service."

## Crop News

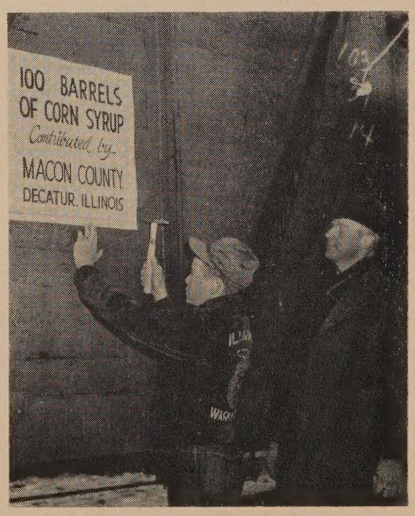
• Half the world's peoples are born, live and die hungry and 80 per cent of the world's problems are rural, Raymond W. Miller of the UN Food and Agriculture Organization recently told an audience.

Mr. Miller spoke at the loading of a Friendship Food Ship with 60 carloads of food to be sent to central Europe as a special United Nations Day gift from farm families in 17 states and from government surplus stores. Sponsoring the shipment was the Christian Rural Overseas Program (CROP).

The FAO spokesman praised the CROP relief efforts of "free men and women to help provide other peoples a better life." But he said that an important part of any overseas food program must be to take agricultural know-how "from where it is to where it is needed." Mr. Miller recently returned from an overseas tour.

Donations of seeds and livestock are especially urgent, Mr. Miller said. He reported that farmers in Italy's Po Valley were "excited" about being able to produce $21 worth of corn from each dollar of hybrid seed sent them through rural Roman Catholic relief agencies here.

CROP has now collected over 3,555 carloads of food for distribution in Europe and Asia.




At Decatur, Illinois, a young man proudly posts a sign on one of the many cars contributed by Illinois farm people to CROP.

## Christian Century's Twelve Great Churches

• About a year ago *Christian Century* began publishing articles about "Great American Churches." The local churches publicized were chosen not by the editors but by the readers in a poll.

Since our job is to note "religious people confronting the rural community," we observe that four of the churches come within the general scope of "town and country." These are:

Olive Chapel Baptist, Apex, N. C., Garland A. Hendricks, pastor. (He has recently taken another position.)

Trinity Lutheran, Freistatt, Mo., W. J. Stelling, pastor.

Evangelical and Reformed, New Knoxville, Ohio, Dietrich A. Bode, pastor.

Washington Prairie Evangelical Lutheran Church, Decorah, Iowa, Oscar E. Engebretson, pastor.

*Life* magazine has run pictures of the churches, activities and pastors. The biggest spread was given to an airplane view of the church in Decorah, Iowa. "Serving a community of farmers of Norwegian ancestry, it encourages parents to bring their babies to church, requires children to face the congregation for questioning on the catechism, owns land which its pastor helps farm. Most of the parishioners are quick to identify themselves with it. Said one of them: 'It's like it was right here on my farm. It's the first thing I see every morning.' "

• Grandma Moses is the subject of a new 16mm motion picture being distributed by A.F. Films (1600 Broadway, New York 19, N. Y.). The twenty-minute film shows Grandma Moses on her farm in Eagle Bridge while the narrator, Archibald MacLeish, gives an account of her life as a farm woman sensitive to the beauties of her surroundings. Only a small portion of the film is devoted to her accomplishments as an untrained folk artist whose pictures have become widely known and loved.

—*New York Folklore Quarterly*

# Where History is Everything
# Or, Concord Revisited

BENSON Y. LANDIS

To be in Concord, Mass., the year ey celebrated the 175th anniversary the battle of Lexington and Con- ord, is to be in a place where history everything. I had been in Concord efore. This year by good fortune I as able to have enough time to ather up many new items as well as opreciate anew Concord's varied lents.

### *nexhaustible Thoreau*

I had long ago decided that Thoreau was inexhaustible. This ear I looked over the special Thoreau library, housed in the Con- ord Free Public Library, and was gain deeply impressed by the life nd work of this man for whom I ave always had special admiration mong all the great men of Concord. Perhaps I have always really been nterested in the "controversial turn" n Thoreau's mind, as well as in his ifts as a poet-naturalist who was so ood an observer that scientists now dmire his product.

Apparently most people in Con- ord thought that Henry was only urning up weeds and ballast and arrying them home. One of his iographers says that the people of he town viewed him with "scorn nd pity," and that he returned the ffront. But how could the Concord f the 1850's know the stature of a nan who made pencils and did odd obs, went on expeditions in woods nd on rivers, and wrote stuff that didn't sell?

And how could Henry Thoreau ave known in 1850 that he would a undred years later be generally nown as a great poet-naturalist? He ad scorned an invitation to join the American Association for the Ad- vancement of Science. And would it ave made any difference in his ainful relations with his community f it could have been known in 1850 hat this was a gifted artist-scientist?

One reflects that many prophets have honor except in their own country, and that many good people, including good ministers, do not get along well with a community having all sorts and conditions of people.

"Give him sunshine and a hand- ful of nuts and he has enough," so Channing observed. Henry Thoreau kept school for but a fortnight in 1837. Later he taught for a while in a private school that his brother John ran for a few years in Concord. There he taught Louisa Alcott. He read a lecture before the Lyceum at Mason's Hall in 1838. He made pencils in 1844 and at intervals for almost twenty years. The pencils were most important. Once when there was a big deficit on a book, he set out to make a thousand dollars worth of pencils to pay the printer's bill. He went to his cabin at Walden Pond on July 4 in 1845 and stayed until the fall of 1847.

### *A Poet*

Thoreau was a good botanist and ornithologist. He was a student of fish and insects, a weather observer, a good gardener and mechanic. But he was in his deepest nature a poet. I believe he would have agreed with the lines of a play I once heard, said by a priest by the way, that "I shall continue to believe that God is a poet."

In 1837, in connection with his commencement at Harvard, Thoreau took part in a "conference" of two persons on "The Commercial Spirit." We would, I suppose, now call this a public conversation rather than a conference. It appears to have been different from a debate. In any case, Thoreau decried a "blind and unlovely love of wealth," which he discerned. He said that it "infuses our thoughts." Thus: "We become selfish in our patriotism, selfish in our domestic relations, selfish in our religion." Only a sensitive man of deep insight could have written that. He went on: "Let men, true to their natures, cultivate the moral affections, lead manly and independent lives; let them make riches the means and not the end of existence, and we shall hear no more of the commercial spirit."

### *Oaken Strength*

Emerson once observed of his best friend, Thoreau: "That oaken strength which I noted whenever he walked or worked, or surveyed wood-lots—the same unhesitating hand with which a field laborer accosts a piece of work which I would shun as a waste of strength—Henry shows in his literary task. He has muscle and ventures on and performs feats which I am forced to decline. In reading him I find the same thoughts, the same spirit that is in me; but he takes a step beyond, and illustrates by excellent images that which I have conveyed in a sleepy generalization."

Thoreau lectured a bit, but this "odd job" was not lucrative. He wrote a letter to Harrison Blake at Milton in 1850, saying that he was willing to read a lecture to a small group in Worcester for his travel expenses.

Thoreau intimated that his whole life was filled with moral decisions, and that there was for him a Great Companion. He had an aversion to the institutions of society, but not to all men. He could write the Essay on Civil Disobedience (which Gandhi followed precisely), but he joined no associations to advance the cause. He was not a participant in the church. He was far more a poet than a stoic, and he lived his sense of spiritual adventure.

### *The Modern Concord*

In the modern Concord, the Walden reservation is owned by the town (township) and is used as a public park in summer months. In Walden Pond there is swimming. On its shores one has finally located the site of Thoreau's cabin. Roland Wells Robbins found it as recently as November 11, 1948, so the bronze tablet on stone informs the modern wanderers. They have erected stout pillars of stone around it and strung

strong iron chains from stone to stone. On the stone that was over his fireplace one reads this inscription: "Go thou my incense upward from this hearth." Modern boys have thrown large stones against the beautiful bronze tablet, and have already considerably damaged it.

Among the well-preserved old homes is that named "Grapevine Cottage," where lived Ephraim Wales Bull who produced the famous Concord grape in 1849. Bull was only an amateur plant-breeder. He was a goldbeater by trade, a horticulturist by avocation. After many years of experimentation, he developed a hardy seedling to replace the grapes he knew that were usually spoiled by early frosts.

In modern Concord there are about 8,500 souls. There is much commuting to Boston. Concord is but nineteen miles from the North Station of Boston. Scarsdale, N. Y., where I live, is nineteen miles from Grand Central Station, New York. I felt that Concord was holding on to things rural much more tenaciously than places nineteen miles from New York.

### *Sons of Revolution*

In this home of revolutionary soldiers who "by the rude bridge that arched the flood . . . fired the shot heard round the world," the Republican candidate for governor in 1948 received 2,587 votes; the Democratic candidate, 1,277 votes. In the election for the 81st Congress, the Republican candidate in the district received 139,288 votes, others 13, and there were 32,836 "blanks." For senator in 1948, the Republican candidate scored 3,983; the Democrat, 855.

The average snowfall for many years has been over fifty-two inches a year. Sometimes there are "traces" in May. The town has its own municipal light plant. (Public ownership is sometimes called socialism or a step toward it.) The library has almost 100,000 books, and spends $18,680 a year for all purposes. It receives about 500 books a year as gifts.

In seventy-seven years the library has received many legacies, which now total $163,344. I hear that in some towns it is not considered decent to die without leaving something to the public library. In 1949 the library circulation was larger than ever. The library served as a collection center for books that people gave to veterans' hospitals.

### *"Neat Cattle"*

The town maintains veterans' advisory services. It has a dental clinic that costs the taxpayers $1,200 a year. There is a public health nurse who, among other items on her program, conducts "well baby conferences."

There is a town officer with the title of "Inspector of Slaughtering." His report for 1949 reads: "During the year no animals to be sold for food were slaughtered in the town."

The tree warden planted forty-five trees on public property, including ten oriental plane trees.

"Neat cattle" numbered 548 on 70 premises in 1949. There were also 1,395 swine, 109 sheep, 96 horses, and 19 goats. Neat cattle are not swine, sheep, goats, horses.

Twenty-nine persons were aided by the Silent Poor Fund, which paid out $1,145. The Union Church of West Concord gave $25 to the Fund.

Long ago more than half the children in the Concord public schools were Roman Catholics. Decades ago, too, the Roman Catholics bought the beautiful white edifice of the Universalists, located on Monument Square. The building had to be enlarged later. The Roman Catholics carefully expanded by maintaining the characteristic New England style of architecture. The Knights of Columbus building is aside of the historic Mason's Hall.

### *The Authentic McCarthys*

The publicly posted honor rolls, containing the names of members of armed forces, are long. Concord men have fought everywhere. The list of 1941-45 contained the names of five McCarthys along with old Yankee names. When the country needed men for Guadalcanal and for big bombing planes the sons and grandsons of Irish and Italian day laborers went forth along with the descendants of older residents. The Irish built the railroads for sixty cents for a sixteen-hour day. Their women were servants in Unitarian and Congregationalists' homes.

As you walk along the almost silent streets of Concord at night you feel that people have been there for a long time and intend to stay for a long time. The McCarthys have now been in Concord for a long time. The boys and girls of all faiths wore minute-men hats in 1950. They walked side by side in all the parades. The McCarthys are authentic—they too are of Concord.

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## Jefferson's Garden

• The versatile founding father, Thomas Jefferson, was a great gardener. He was always writing his daughters, whether from the cold north of Philadelphia, or from Paris, about the coming spring, or other changes of seasons, and the birds and the gardens. Once he wrote to his daughter Maria from Philadelphia, longing for word about the plants of his beloved Monticello—in March, 1791:

"On the 27th of February I saw blackbirds and robin redbreasts, and on the 7th of this month I heard frogs for the first time this year. Have you noted the first appearance of these things at Monticello? I hope you have and will continue to note every appearance, animal and vegetable, which indicates the approach of spring, and will communicate them to me. By this means we shall be able to compare climates of Philadelphia and Monticello. Tell me when you shall have peas, etc., up; when everything comes to table; when you shall have the first chickens hatched; when every kind of trees blossom, or puts forth leaves; when each kind of flower blooms."

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## In the First Century

• "As to myself, I live in a little town, and I choose to live there, lest it should become still less," wrote Plutarch, the great biographer of antiquity. Plutarch lived in Chaeronea, in Boetia.

## A Prayer in Spring

O Divine Creator, by whose provi-
ice the seasons come and go, we
ise Thee that the winter is past,
t the flowers appear on the earth
d the time of the singing of birds
come. For the fresh green beauty
out us, for new life springing
th from seed and shell, for the
ing of the friendly beasts that
nister to human needs, for the
istent calls to labor, to fertilize
d plow the fields, to sow the seed,
thank Thee, O God of the seed-
ne. . . .

Strengthen within us the ancient
th that as the earth bringeth
th her bud and the garden
useth the things that are sown in
to spring forth, so the Lord will
use righteousness and praise to
ring forth before all the nations.
ay we see in this vernal season the
mbol of the resurrection of our
rd, the reminder that life is ever
ord of death and Love must claim
own. This we ask in the name of
im who died and rose again and
veth evermore. *Amen.*

—Kenneth C. MacArthur

## Trained Leadership

The ways in which some rural
hurches, with inadequate equip-
ent and space, have utilized avail-
ble facilities to train teachers and
eaders is told by Edward and Anna
Laura Gebhard in a recent issue of
he *International Journal of Re-
gious Education,* Chicago, Ill. The
rticle is entitled "How Rural
Churches Get Trained Leaders."

One of these village churches used
chool board or staff meetings to
help train teachers; in another coun-
y "the ministers of one denomina-
ion pooled their resources and
raining and set up a quarterly
workers' conference for the com-
bined teaching staffs of their
churches." Audio-visual aids in the
field of religious education have
helped some rural churches to meet
their "persistent" needs, as have one-
day conferences, county and state
conventions, etc.

## Redemption

The man has seen his acres stretch-
ing bare
And scarred beneath the wind
and driving rain
And he has wondered with a sick
despair
If he would make a decent crop
again.

Now he has learned to cherish and
to build,
Restored the vigor that had
drained away
And marvelled as he saw the miracle
Of strong green sod replacing bar-
ren clay. . . .

And thought:
If these poor fields can turn to green
Love may yet flower in the hearts of
men.

—Mary S. Taylor, in *The Progressive Farmer*

## Church Takes Farmer as Preacher

• At Byron, California, in the northern part of the San Joaquin Valley, the people in the country church there asked George Anderson, a farmer, to take the pulpit temporarily several years ago. There has been no request for a change. Mr. Anderson says that his farm is the best place on earth and that "every man should feel that way about his farm," according to a recent article in *Country Gentleman.*

## Easter Day

Oh! day of days! shall hearts set free
No "minstrel rapture" find for thee?
Thou art the Sun of other days,
They shine by giving back thy rays.

Enthroned in thy sovereign sphere
Thou shedd'st thy light on all the
year;
Sundays by thee more glorious break,
An Easter Day in every week.

Then wake, my soul, to high desires,
And earlier light thine altar fires:
The world some hours is on her
way,
Nor thinks on thee, thou blessed
day.

Yet even the lifeless stone is dear
For thoughts of Him who late lay
here;
And the base world, now Christ hath
died,
Ennobled is and glorified.

So is it still: to holy tears,
In lonely hours, Christ risen ap-
pears:
In social hours, who Christ would
see
Must turn all tasks to Charity.

—John Keble, in *The Christian Year*

### Purposes of This Journal

The purposes of this Journal are:

A. To encourage cooperation among rural churches.

B. To improve the administration of the local church, this to include organization of the church, finance, religious education, community relationships, and the training of lay leadership.

C. To stimulate the development of a Christian philosophy of rural life, this to embrace ethical issues in agriculture, social reconstruction, and government programs; and the content of the minister's message.

### Part of Larger Program

The Journal is an important part of an enlarged "cooperative rural church program" that will encourage a national "rural church movement."

# The Federated Church

## An Episcopal Clergyman Speaks

SAMUEL N. McCAIN, JR.

• What is a federated church? How easy it is for almost any Christian person or denomination to say that the current division among Christians is none of his concern. Or perhaps he washes his hands of church unity by saying that the cause of division lies at the feet of the Roman Catholic or the Protestant Church. But if we as Christians believe the body of Christ is one, each of us should strive toward this end in our own community. The federated church is one means of tackling this problem.

### *Our Definition*

In Burlingame, Kansas, our vision of the Federated Church is a united effort of three denominations—Baptist, Methodist, and Presbyterian—to minister to the spiritual needs of the whole community. The church doors are always open to all, with a standing invitation to other denominations of sound teaching to cooperate with us. Each denominational group is encouraged to maintain its national affiliations and give to the federated church the best it has to offer. This approach helps us to meet effectively the desire of other denominations that might wish to open independent pieces of work in this field.

Each person is recorded as a member of a particular denomination. Those received by letter may belong to other than one of the three constituting denominations. Each person who is received into full membership is received into one of the branches of the federation. (Some federated churches admit members to the federated church as such.)

We find that with a united financial appeal to the whole community our giving is greatly increased which, in turn, increases the mission giving to the various denominations. As the quotas are met, and even oversubscribed, the various denominational headquarters will see that federation can prosper their respective interests. This should in turn encourage state officers to cooperate more fully in other overchurched town-country areas to establish other federated churches.

### *United Witness*

A federated church such as is in Burlingame, which was organized in 1948, truly is an opportunity and challenge to make a strong, united witness to Christ in a whole community. Basically the Gospel is for a community of people. The Gospel cannot be effectively and fully lived as a church reaches only groups of like-minded souls. If a church does preach the full Gospel, it is for all men equally. Christian division more than any other cause may be blamed for the division and chaos of our world today.

It may be asked, "But how does one minister to such diverse groups?" Each of us has strong ties binding us one to another. The thinking of past years of the church as being a group of people that meets weekly in an auditorium to hear the sermon preached has weakened the whole spiritual life of Protestantism greatly. This has helped to make many of us "Sunday Christians." A fuller understanding of the nature of the church is gladly received by all. The theological basis of ministry is apt to be slighted by many Protestants, but sound teaching is almost always well received.

Yet, as strong as are the ties binding all Christians as brothers, without great charity and patience all our unity and fellowship would be continually troubled. To date, the oneness of our worship, prayer and all efforts, truly indicates that the Holy Spirit is with us. One of the most attractive features of such a call from the minister's point of view is the "community" nature of the work. On walking down-street I can say "hello" to each person, knowing he is potentially a member of my congregation (except for a small Southern Baptist Mission that entered the community about the time the federation began, and a Pentecostal Church of some strength and length of tenure in the area which apparently draws its membership from neighboring towns). This same fact should help each person in the community to see and realize his relationship to every other person.

One sorrowful fact about a work such as this is that so frequently a community must be "down and out" before churches can federate. How much more effective our united effort for Christ would be if strong growing congregations could federate or at least cooperate in real ways not only in town-country areas, but in cities as well. Parish boundaries and parish families truly are a great help in building Christ's kingdom on earth.

### *Unique Ministry*

As an Episcopal presbyter my ministry in this situation is rather unique, and tremendously challenging. With the full backing of the diocesan, as well as the devout prayer of the diocese, I find I am greatly strengthened in my position. At no time have I found it necessary to compromise the basic teachings of the church or my ordination vows, though it has been necessary to adjust.

The church board, not the minister, is the final authority in church affairs; I never wear a collar or vestments (except for a stole at sacramental services); I rarely kneel during service, and am liberal in arrangements that are made for funerals and weddings; I use pastoral prayers and "preach" a funeral (using the Burial Office for its structure). I require (and am upheld by the church board) periods of counseling for bridal couples. I instruct adult candidates for baptism, and at least have started the precedent of confirmation or candidate instruction.

Such an experimental field as this also has real significance for the Episcopal Church. One of the things we notice in any diocese is the number of communities, large and small, that have no Episcopal ministrations at all. I do not feel that we should have a church at each crossroads, though we should in some

nner be able to give Episcopal nistry to each community. This ds me to conclude that the Epispal Church should determine at communities it is not reachg, and then cooperate actively th some Protestant church in that ld.

In closing I might speak of two nificant events in the life of the urch this past year. One was the eat success and inspiration of the nvass for funds. It was conducted connection with the World Wide ommunion visitation on Sunday, ptember 22. Some eighty people ent out, and almost without exceon gladly called on nearly all the milies in the area, asking them to ve of their time.

The wisdom and strength of a nited appeal for Christ in the comunity is now fully evident to us. he second event was the World Vide Communion Service. Despite in, a fine congregation was presnt. A statement was made at that me (we were using an Episcopal rvice as well as intinction with ine) that no person should feel he as being forced toward one deomination or another, but that ach of us should give heart-felt hanks to God for the fact that a hole community was gathered round one table in the Lord's ame. The service was a wonderully moving experience.

So, I feel there is truly an exeptional opportunity present in urlingame which, God willing, vill lead not only our community s one to Christ, but will help to nake His Church more truly one n this country of ours and in the vorld.

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## The Distributist Bookstall

At Stotlers Cross Roads, W. Va., David Hennessy maintains The Disributist Bookstall. He has books nd pamphlets on decentralist and istributist subjects. He carries titles ublished by English and American vriters. Mr. Hennessy is a Roman Catholic layman. He is also a farmr. His literature covers a wide ange of interests by both Roman Catholic and other authors.

## Again . . . Pioneers!

• The Protestant churches, working through church councils and other agencies, have arranged the production of a new feature film, *AGAIN . . . PIONEERS!*

*AGAIN . . . PIONEERS!* was produced at the request of the Home Missions Council of North America to provide an inspirational background for home missions studies by the churches. Mission boards of fourteen major denominations (Presbyterian Church in the USA, Methodist Church, American Baptist Convention, Congregational Christian Churches, United Presbyterian Church of North America, American Lutheran Church, Church of the Brethren, Disciples of Christ, Evangelical & Reformed Church, Presbyterian Church in the U.S., Reformed Church in America, United Church of Canada, Evangelical United Brethren Church, and Church of England in Canada) underwrote the cost of production. According to Dr. Frederick R. Thorne of the Presbyterian Board of National Missions, who supervised the production, the film is the most ambitious effort of the churches thus far to present the cause of missions in dramatic form. Dr. Thorne declared that no other religious film so far produced has been cast with so many featured players and has had access to such technical resources as those at Metro-Goldwyn-Mayer and Nassour studios where the picture was filmed.

Beautiful Colleen Townsend, who recently renounced a promising theatrical career to take up religious studies, plays one of the leading parts. Other well-known actors included in the cast are Tom Powers of Theatre Guild fame, Regis Toomey, well-known film player, Sarah Padden, outstanding character actress, and Evelyn Brent, well-known actress of stage and screen.

*AGAIN . . . PIONEERS!* was produced by Protestant Film Commission. It runs approximately sixty-five minutes and is being released through The Religious Film Association, New York, as a sixteen millimeter sound film to denominational and commercial film libraries throughout the country. Because of the desire of its makers to have it seen as widely as possible, only a nominal rental fee of $12.00 is being charged for the film.

Scene from *Again . . . Pioneers!* which was produced by the Protestant Film Commission for the home missions boards of major Protestant denominations.

# Topic for Friendly Debate

Last winter "Worship in the Rural Church Series" (edited by Edward K. Ziegler, and published by Agricultural Missions, Inc.) in a bulletin on "The Rural Church at Worship," reprinted from *Voice of Missions,* February, 1940, these lines:

### *Country-bred*

ALBERT LEONARD MURRAY

Our Saviour Christ was country-bred,
By country homes His flocks He led.
He learned to read in country schools,
On farms, His hands gained skill with tools.
He toiled in fields of growing grain,
And scanned the sky for signs of rain.
He knew the feel of fresh-turned earth,
And loved the rural folk, from birth.
He was at home with plants and seeds,
The country met His social needs.
The country gave Christ full accord,—
The city crucified our Lord!

Is the city more pagan than the country? Is it true that "the hugeness of the city churches negates real fellowship," that "the 'city mind' stresses the importance of large numbers, efficiency, wealth and security, sophistication, grace of manners and knowing the 'right' people"?

Edwin McNeil Poteat has somewhere written:

"He too loved beauty, but a city drew Him.
Flowers He found in little children's eyes;
Something of grace in lepers stumbling to Him;
Fragrance from spikenard spilt in sweet surprise;
Joy in forgiving men at last who slew Him;
Courage in service, hope in sacrifice."

Facing up with the 500,000 persons in Greater Pittsburgh, most of whom "have lingering loyalties to some church" but no active affiliation with any, the late Dr. Hugh Thomson Kerr asked, "What are our cloistered, comfortable, complacent churches going to do about it?" He closed a sermon that referred to the recent extensive church survey in Pittsburgh by quoting some lines from a Christmas card, written by Kagawa:

"I read in a Book
That a man
Called Christ
Went about doing good.
It is very disconcerting
To me
That I am so easily satisfied
With just going about."

### *A Two-Way Problem*

Says a wise Protestant leader in one of the most progressive Southern states, speaking out of long acquaintance with many churches, largely rural in the past, in a situation now increasingly urban: "The urban church has not been too well acquainted with rural problems. That however has not been as costly to our work as the fact that our people in the rural churches have known so little about our urban churches that when many of them have moved into urban areas they have seemed greatly surprised that the churches they found were not exactly like the church from which they had come. Many of them were unable or unwilling to attempt to adjust to the program of the city church."

This astute comment suggests that town and country church leaders have a splendid opportunity to prepare rural people for participation in urban church life. Might not urban churches invite deputations of rural church people to visit a Sunday service, and show them the same attention that Chambers of Commerce, civic clubs, and other bodies located in urban centers do?

On the other hand, *The Anglican Outlook* goes so far as to say: "The 'rural problem' is in fact not rural at all but is the 'city mind' which at present runs everything, and does not do it very well. God grant that the church may take the lead in this matter and tend her roots well."

—Reprinted from
*The City Church*

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### Lord's Acre at Whitewater

• Those who watched with anticipation the progress of the Lord's Acre Program at Whitewater, Mo., were sufficiently rewarded on November 5th at their Harvest Home Festival when all the people brought their tithes and offerings into the storehouse of God and placed them on the altar. The offering totaled $931.00. What a tribute to the loyalty and stewardship of the congregation of the Whitewater Church!

The Harvest Home Program began at 10:45 a.m. with a processional of 40 voices in a united choir representing the Cornwall, Fredericktown, Patton, and Whitewater churches. Following the processional a harvest litany was read responsively. The united choir then sang as an anthem the hymn, "Come Ye Thankful People Come." The eighth chapter of Deuteronomy was read after which all the people were invited to bring their Lord's Acre gifts to the altar. It was thrilling to see the young and the old and all ages in between filing by and placing their gifts on the altar—gifts which represented God's most gracious providence, man's sweat and toil, and the good earth's bountiful increase. Surely the Spirit of the Living God was with us.

Dr. Henry Randolph, Secretary of Rural Church Work in our Presbyterian Church, then spoke on "The Church and Rural Life," reminding us that "the earth is the Lord's and the fullness thereof; the world and all they that are therein." There can be no strong rural church, he said, unless rural people become better stewards of God's Holy Earth. The job of the church is and always has been to save souls; but we cannot have an effective job

saving souls without saving the and redeeming the community which we live.

At the noon hour a most delicious ket dinner was served in the new ement of the church, after which re-convened for a song festival harvest hymns and spirituals. v. Marion Griffin then delivered warm and moving address on the ject, "Stewardship of the Soil." e program for the day was con- ded with a panel discussion by laymen on the theme, "What the ral Church Needs." Rev. Harold rson, Sunday School Missionary Ozark and Iron Mountain Pres- teries, led the discussion, which ntered around the problem of at- cting and holding young people our churches. Though there were ferences of opinion on what the urch should do, it was agreed that e church was not being consistent it condemned unwholesome in- ences, entertainment, and recrea- n in the community if it did not onsor good and wholesome in- ence in place of the evil ones. hen we were dismissed we thanked d for such a day and hoped for re like it.

Copied from *The Parish Messenger,* blished monthly by Iron Mountain Co- erative Parish of Iron Mountain Pres- tery of the Synod of Missouri, Presby- ian Church U.S.A.

## Youth Organization

How can lay workers plan and rry out successful youth programs rural churches? A recent issue of *he Methodist Layman* features an ticle by Ted Miles, a layman who ves in Baldwin, Kansas, entitled, Starting a Youth Organization in e Rural Church."

Mr. Miles suggests the possibility organizing a teen-age youth group meet on Sunday evenings, com- ning recreation and worship. As e young people "become interest- l in the Sunday morning church rvice," Mr. Miles suggests that they given "jobs" to do, for these ung people will "provide the aders of tomorrow's churches."

# Book Reviews

*Making Good Communities Better.* By Irwin T. Sanders. University of Kentucky Press, Lexington, Ky., 1950. $2.00.

This is a "handbook for civic-minded men and women," with "selected guideposts by seventeen authorities." The author has no sooner told us "what makes a good community," when he says "but communities differ." He has a philosophy of community service that should appeal to the religious people who confront the rural community. He frankly says at the outset that his book has no "pat formulas to apply everywhere under every condition; it emphasizes thinking before doing, and at times advises social patience rather than social action." (Country ministers should be thankful for this!)

The book is written for officer or "leader" of a "club, society, association, or any other formal group; for those aiding in any community-wide effort . . ."; for those strengthening or administering an institution "such as the church, the school, government or a business enterprise"; for those who are students "of society and wish to learn more about the whys and wherefores of community life."

And then it's a sort of a headbook, rather than a handbook. It simply "tells you what to think about, gives you a point of view, suggests possible solutions to problems of community organization."

Among the authorities giving practical advice, and their subjects, are:

"Locating and Using Professionally Trained Community Specialists," by John H. Given.

"How to Size Up Changes Taking Place in a Community," by Arthur Raper.

"How to Organize a Community Chest," by Community Chests and Councils, Inc.

"How the Church can Contribute to Community Programs," by Mark Rich.

"How to Organize a Community Council," by Robert A. Polson.

"Points to Remember in Planning a Meeting," by Irwin T. Sanders.

"How to Conduct a Community Meeting," by Howard W. Beers.

—Benson Y. Landis

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*All Things Common.* By Claire Huchet Bishop. Harper and Brothers, New York. 1950. $3.00.

"We are all looking for some more fraternal way of living," said a leader of one of the "communities of work" described in this book. All are in western Europe. "Communities of work hold that true relationships and a better way of living can be evolved only when whole human beings are present to other whole human beings, instead of being present under only one of their aspects as it happens in today's society."

There are about sixty communities of work, many of recent origin. There are varieties of method for remuneration of the workers, for financing, for setting up reserves. "All communitarian efforts are directed toward a way of life in which total human value is taken into consideration and fully recognized." These communities of work own their means of production. Thus ownership of this means is altogether social and indivisible, just as the common of a New England town. "Members of the community have the use and the fruit of it."

This social ownership in the communities of work "is not an end in itself." It is not "the final answer to all human troubles." But it does generate social responsibility. It is a step toward fulfillment of the values of the people.

And who are the people? Roman Catholics and Protestants, Marxists and non-Marxists, adherents of consumer cooperation and those opposed to it, mostly people who suffered in World War II, and are groping toward the light.

They have ideas of their own and are expressing them. And their ideas have hands and feet.

—B. Y. L.

*Rural Social Systems.* By Charles P. Loomis and J. Allen Beegle. Prentice-Hall. $6.75.

Only about a dozen textbooks on rural sociology have ever been printed and no more than a half-dozen are up-to-date and available at any given time. It is an event, therefore, when a new text appears, especially when it is a good one like *Rural Social Systems.* Rural leaders very much need the accurate facts and a sound theory of rural society. Especially among rural church leaders there is often more enthusiasm than knowledge. Every rural pastor should master at least one rural sociology text. This book qualifies as one worthy of careful study.

Rural ministers will wish to read not only the two excellent chapters on religion and the rural church but the sections on the rural family, community, school and rural welfare. Perhaps they will find most useful the material on rural stratification at a time when their churches face the class issue in terms of enlisting both the villager and the farmer, the land-owner and the tenant or hired hand, the old-settler and the migrant.

The most original material is presented in the first chapter and an appendix suggesting a ten-point scale for identifying rural social organizations as to relationship characteristics. Two German terms are used to designate the extremes from informal or family-type organization to formal or contractual-type. The familistic type is called, *Gemeinschaft;* the contractual is designated, *Gesellschaft.* Church leaders will be interested in understanding this view of rural society and in trying to determine where their church fits into the scale and why.

—Thomas Alfred Tripp

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*Biography of a Country Church.* By Garland A. Hendricks. Boardman Press, Nashville, Tenn. 1950. $2.00.

*Biography of a Country Church* is the story of the Olive Chapel Baptist Church, located in Wake County, North Carolina, a few miles from Raleigh, the capital. In October 1950 this open country church celebrated its centennial and reviewed its heritage. Two months prior to this it had been recognized by *Christian Century,* through its poll of ministers, as one of the great rural churches of America.

This church had its origin in what was then a frontier southern community. The first "meetinghouse" was a product of the labor of the people, from native materials. The program of the church consisted of preaching once a month and an annual revival or protracted meeting. For this meeting "the pastor was instructed to get as many preachers to assist him as he thought would be necessary to get the sinners converted." The first ministers were subject to an "annual call" and were promised $50 in cash. During those early years there was much concern with discipline and a determination "to do something about the devil running loose in the lives of church folk."

In 1943 the author went to Olive Chapel as minister. His recommendation to the church was adoption of goals for a year: "Consecrated living, faithful workers, good attendance, liberal contributions, world vision and improved grounds." A six year program of work was outlined to be completed when the church was one hundred years old —November 1950. In his seven years as minister to Olive Chapel, Garland A. Hendricks has awakened many churchmen of his denomination to the role and significance of the rural church.

The *Biography of a Country Church* should encourage many rural ministers to study and reformulate a community program against the background of the church's heritage and resources.

—Vladimir E. Hartman

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## The Old Barns

• The old barns built in the time of the great tradition of American agriculture when the new land was still rich and unravaged by greed and bad farming, had each one its own character, its special beauty born of the same order of spirit and devotion which built the great cathedrals of Chartres or Rheims or Salzburg. They were built out of love and pride in the earth, each with a little element of triumphal boastfulness—as if each barn was saying to all the rich neighboring countryside, "Look at me! What a fine splendid thing I am, built by a loving master, sheltering fat cattle and big-uddered cows and great bins of grain! Look at me! A temple raised to plenty and to the beauty of the earth! A temple of abundance and good living!"

—Louis Bromfield

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## *Correspondence*

To the Editor of Town and Country Church:

I have just read the January 1951 issue of Town and Country Church. Many things in it captured my interest.

Shirley Greene not only throws light on what is happening in the Columbia River Valley but his description of the river stirs up a lot of nostalgia in a westerner. Jean and Jesse Ogden let us in on a cooperative church development in Virginia and James Merlin from the Idaho Pan Handle tells how "Big Brother" church helps a little church. As a great admirer of the late Malcolm Dana, my heart warmed with the reading of Bristol Chatterton's review of his life. The reprint of your interview with Robert Frost shares a point of view and the faith of a great poet and man.

What I am trying to say is that you are editing a very good journal with a wide variety of useful material. I hope that those who see the paper for the first time will not be misled by modest appearance; its value is far greater than its humble format predicts. We would have more effective churches if a copy went into every rural parsonage in America.

Sincerely yours,

Mark Rich
Secretary, Town and Country Work
American Baptist Home Mission Society